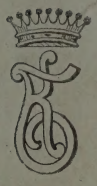
1869

M. B. A.



THE

KOUCHELEFF BESBORODKO

PICTURES;

ALSO THE

CELEBRATED KOUCHELEFF SAPPHIRE.

Sale of 43 pictures held in Paris 5th June 1869

M. B. A.
1869
July 7
LoFoK

PALL MALL.

CATALOGUE RAISONNÉE

OF

TWENTY-EIGHT

HIGH-CLASS PICTURES,

BEING A PORTION OF THE CELEBRATED

[Count Grégoire Koucheleff Besborodko]

Koucheleff Besborodko Gallery;

ALSO,

THE MAGNIFICENT KOUCHELEFF SAPPHIRE.

L. 31399

Which will be Sold by Auction,

BY

MESSRS. FOSTER

At the Gallery, 54, *Pall Mall*,

On WEDNESDAY, the 7th day of JULY, 1869,

AT ONE FOR TWO O'CLOCK PRECISELY,

By direction of His Excellency the Comte Koucheleff Besborodko.

May be Viewed Two Days preceding the Auction.

Printed by J. Davy and Sons, 137, Long Acre.

CONDITIONS OF SALE.

I. THE highest Bidder to be the Buyer; and if any dispute arise between two or more Bidders, the Lot so in dispute shall be immediately put up again and re-sold.

II. No Person shall advance less than Five Guineas at each bidding, or such sum as the Auctioneer may decide.

III. The Purchasers to give in their Names and Places of Abode, and to pay down 5*s.* in the Pound, or more, in part payment, or the whole of the Purchase Money, *if required;* in default of which, the Lot or Lots so purchased to be immediately put up again and re-sold.

IV. The Lots to be taken away and paid for, with all faults and errors of description, at the Buyer's expense and risk, within Two days from the Sale; Messrs. FOSTER not being responsible for the correct description, genuineness, or authenticity of any Lot, or for any remarks made in the Catalogue.

V. Upon failure of complying with the above Conditions, the Money deposited in part of payment shall be forfeited; all Lots uncleared within the time aforesaid shall be re-sold by public or private Sale, and the deficiency (if any) attending such re-sale shall be made good by the Defaulter at this Sale.

PREFACE.

THE celebrated Koucheleff Besborodko Collection was founded by Prince Alexander Besborodko, Grand Chancellor of the Russian Empire, under Catherine II. and Paul I.

Passionately fond of painting, like the Empress, his sovereign, the favourite Potemkin and Count Strogonoff, (for whom Lebrun selected his Gallery), he purchased from the most authentic sources, from the Cabinets of the Duke of Orléans, the Duke of Choiseul, and of the Count de Véri, at the very time when Russia, under the charm of French influence, was adopting its civilization and forcing itself to partake of its tastes.

During the course of the French Revolution, this Collection was still further increased by the acquisitions obtained from emigrant Princes, who had taken with them in their flight the most precious gems of their cabinets.

We know what cultivated taste directed the selection of the Galleries from which these Pictures came, principally the Cabinet of the Palais Royal and the Collection of the Duke de Choiseul; others were chosen from the Galleries of Jabrach, of Crozat, of Philippe D'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV., and of the Regent, who had themselves secured them at the sales of Charles I. of England, of Queen Christina of Sweden, of Montarsis, of Lord Somers, of Van der Shelling, and of other amateurs who were almost contemporary with the artists, for whose works they made research.

The Pictures are nearly all signed, and have mostly been engraved. They are in the same condition as when left by the Chancellor of Russia to his heirs, in the same frames, only re-gilt and stamped with the letters "A.B.," the initials of their ancient proprietor. For a century they have been in the possession of the

same family, and have not been subjected to those frequent changes in which the most valuable canvasses run the risk of losing their value. But authenticity and good preservation are not the only merits of a painting; it is also necessary that it should have been chosen as a good specimen of the master.

In the Koucheleff Gallery, the Paintings are all of the first class, and we believe that some of these Pictures, are amongst the best specimens of the masters.

Another merit of the Koucheleff Gallery, exclusive of the spirit in which it has been collected, is its variety.

It is with pleasure that we find there some specimens of the Italian School, well conceived, boldly designed, and powerfully expressive, such as The Woman taken in Adultery, by Paul Veronese, a magnificent and noble picture; and a Dead Christ, of wonderful power.

An Infant Jesus asleep on a cross, by Guido Reni, is one of the best examples of this master, and marked by all the excellencies of his style.

To a small but very fine sketch of Coreggio's are to be added two allegorical subjects by Battoni; Virgin and Jesus, by Beretini; A Landscape, by Salvator Rosa; and, though last mentioned, by no means the least important, the magnificent Holy Family, of Andrea del Sarto.

Of the Spanish School there is but one example, this is "The Agony in the Garden," by Murillo.

The French School has some important examples. A Shipwreck by Joseph Vernet, specially remarkable for the originality of its effect and the number and choice of episodes; two spirited Battle Pieces, by Jean Courtois, called Il Borgognone; an Interior of Garde de Corps, with well-told incidents and clever handling, by Jean le Ducq; and a Portrait of Madame Recamier, by Prud'hon.

But it is the Flemish and Dutch Schools which contribute the finest as well as the greatest number of paintings from the Koucheleff Collection.

Rembrandt's great picture of Christ with the Reed, with its wonderful lights and shadows, and telling arrangement of colours, is a splendid example; its size, for the figures are that of life, adding to the effect.

The Cattle Piece by Paul Potter, is strikingly life-like, and exquisite in quality.

Karel du Jardin presents us with a View in the Italian Campagna of Peasants and Cattle fording a River, a picture containing all his breadth and effect.

Van Dyck contributes but one picture, Time cutting the Wings of Love, which is well known to connoisseurs from its having formed part of the Fesch Collection at Rome.

A Battle-piece by Nicolas Van Eyck; a gem of Berchem's, called the Caravan; and a Landscape with Mill, by Hobbema, also belong to the same school, as also an old Man's Head, by J. Bol, and two pictures by Dietrich.

Such is a slight notice of some of the pictures of the Koucheleff Collection. Amateurs will be able to judge for themselves; but we cannot conclude without pointing out the taste shewn in the choice of this Gallery, where not only *names* are to be found, but *works* in all the perfection of each master.

J. KOLISCH.

A CATALOGUE.

On WEDNESDAY, the 7th day of JULY, 1869,

AT TWO O'CLOCK PRECISELY.

LOT I.

BERRETINI (P. DA CORTONA).

£22/1 Davis

VIRGIN AND CHILD.

The Infant Jesus is seated on a tasselled cushion, his right hand raised with the two first fingers extended. The Virgin supports him with her right arm, the hand resting on the cushion. The whole figure of the Infant is shewn. The draperies are particularly well painted, and the picture is full of tender expression.

Size 18½ in. by 15 in.

LOT II.

BATTONI (POMPEO).

Time revealing Truth—An Allegory.

To the right of this picture stands Time withdrawing a veil from a half reclining semi-nude female figure, who holds a globe in her extended left hand; the whole of the upper part is bathed in light.

Below reclines a male figure, his hands resting on an open book; and to the right a Cupid carrying an hour glass is running away from Time.

Size 45½ in. by 33½ in.

LOT III.

BATTONI (POMPEO).

11 gns.

Time introducing Old Age to Beauty—Allegorical.

On the right, Time, seated, in a rocky cavern, and holding an hour glass in his right hand, which rests on his knee, is pointing with his left to a young woman in a turban. The figure is dressed in a green petticoat, over which is a red robe which she holds up in her right hand. Behind Time, an old and wrinkled hag, holding a long staff in her left hand, is stretching out her right towards the face of the young female, who shrinks back from the touch.

On the left hand in the back-ground is the entrance to the cavern, through which a landscape with trees is seen.

Size 38½ in. by 52½ in.

Br. mat Paris sale (6)

LOT IV.

E 25/4 Bentley

CANALETTI (ANTONIO).

The Quay of the Sclavonians, Venice.

In the centre are the two columns of Saint Mark and Saint George, before the Procurati La Dogana, the Church of Santa Maria del Salute to the right, and in the distance La Guideca. On the quay are figures in dresses of the time of Louis XV. On the Grand Canal gondolas, and some merchant vessels are moored to the quay.

Size 43½ in. by 28 in.

Bst, wk at Paris
see (7)

15½ gns
Bentley

LOT V.

CANALETTI (ANTONIO).

Quay of the Arsenal and Port of Venice.

Three masted galleys, moored to the quay, bear the flag of the Doge. To the left, a tartane, of which only the prow is visible, is entering the port; in the distance gondolas are crossing the canal, and vessels transporting merchandise.

In the distance are the Ducal Palace, the Domes of St. Mark, the Procurati, and the beginning of the Grand Canal.

Size 43½ in. by 28 in.

LOT VI.

RENI (GUIDO).

Infant Jesus asleep on a Cross.

The Infant Jesus reposes in an easy and natural position, the elbow of his right arm resting on the cross, and the hand supporting his head; the cross is partly covered by a white sheet. In front, to the left, the emblems of the Passion—the crown of thorns, the reed, &c., are placed on a flat slab of stone.

In the background is a hill (which rises behind the figure), and on its summit an olive tree; in the distance a palm tree, beyond which stretches the sea.

Size 11½ in. by 8½ in.

LOT VII.

5½ from Davis

COREGGIO (ALLEGRI).

Head of a Cherub.

Although a sketch, this painting bears the stamp of the master's hand in its broad and powerful treatment.

Size 12 in. by 14½ in.

LOT VIII. 260 fm Barker

SALVATOR ROSA.

Mountain and Forest.

A wild and savage scene. To the right are trees torn and broken by a raging storm which has just passed and can still be seen in the half cleared sky. To the left, a shepherd, seated, tends his sheep, which are drinking at a pool in front; and behind him are some cattle.

The wildness of the scene and the tracks of the destructive storm are painted with all the power peculiar to this great master.

Size 73 in. by 51 in.

750 Gn. Marshall (2 Kt. in)

LOT IX.

DEL SARTO (ANDREA).

The Holy Family.

The Virgin is kneeling; her left hand pressed to her bosom, whilst her right arm encircles the Infant Jesus, who reclines across her knees, holding a scroll in his hands.

To the left is the youthful figure of Saint John the Baptist, his right hand extended, his left resting on a short staff in the form of a cross; behind him is Joseph, whose right arm encircles the young Saint.

A green hill rising in the background, and on its summit the walls of a city; and a cloudy sky finishes the distance.

The Virgin is clothed in a red robe with yellow sleeves, a purple head dress, and a blue scarf across her shoulders falling to the ground.

The face of the Christ is turned up towards that of Saint John, with an expression of earnest attention; that of the young Baptist is impassioned; whilst the tender, maternal affection of the Virgin is impressively pourtrayed.

Size 49 in. by 38 in.

LOT X.

VERONESE (PAOLO-CAGLIARI).

Dead Christ and the Three Marys.

(Christ dans le Linceul).

In front the figure of the Dead Saviour, bleeding from wounds, is supported by his mother, who holds one end of the sheet in which he is about to be enveloped, the other end is held by Mary Magdalene, who stands at the left-hand side.

The expression of grief in the face of the Virgin is intense, as is that of the Third Mary, whose face only is seen over the figure of Christ; but the two expressions are entirely different; the maternal sorrow is inexpressibly touching.

The draperies are painted with great care, and the sombre background adds greatly to the effect.

Size 36 in. by 26 in.

340 gn. Class (?Br. in)

Br. in at Paris sale (37)

LOT XI.

VERONESE (PAOLO-CAGLIARI).

The Woman taken in Adultery.

Under a portico supported by Corinthian columns, Jesus is surrounded by the Doctors, pointing with his right hand to the words he has just written on the floor; an obese man, covered with a yellow mantle with a hood and violet undercoat, looks at Christ with astonishment, his right hand extended. An old man with a beard, whose face alone is seen, has a green head dress with an inscription in Hebrew, and between his head and Christ's is that of a woman. To the left of Christ another old man, bald and bearded, is trying to read by the aid of spectacles a paper in Hebrew, which he holds unrolled in both hands; he is clothed in a violet surplice and a green robe. Near him, a child, whose back is seen, holds an open book; he is clothed in a white robe with grey stripes, and a girdle from which hangs an ink horn and style for writing. On his head a Hebrew inscription; behind him the heads of two men in turbans. To the left, the adulterous woman in a yellow robe and white petticoat; her left shoulder is bare, and her fair-haired head full in front, her hands, tied with a rope, are held by a man. In the middle a woman is holding a child near a soldier, who carries a halbert, and whose helmet and the upper part of the face are seen. Near the principal female figure is another woman, covered with a blue veil. In the background, blue sky, grey clouds and columns of marble.

Size 6 ft. 9 in. by 5 ft. 1 in.

LOT XII.

ITALIAN SCHOOL.

Virgin and Child.

The Virgin holding the Infant Jesus on her knees is seated on clouds, supported by Cherubim. A glory of light forms the back ground, and fills up the picture.

Size 18 in. by 12½ in.

400 gns
FREEMAN

LOT XIII.

MURILLO (BARTOLOMÉ ESTEVAN).

The Agony in the Garden.

In the foreground, to the right, the three Apostles are lying asleep (St. Peter in front) wrapped in their mantles. To the left, on a slight elevation of the ground, Christ is kneeling with his hands clasped, and an expression of the bitterest agony on his face. The figure is clothed in a blue robe, and behind lies a red mantle which has fallen from the shoulders. The face is turned up towards the angel, who presents the cup in his right hand; his left supporting a cross.

Beyond stretches the deep gloom of the trees, and in the background, on the right, the soldiers carrying torches are crowding into the garden through an arched gateway.

Size 56½ in. by 45½ in.

LOT XIV.

PRUD'HON (PIERRE PAUL).

Portrait of Madame Recamier.

A full-face portrait of this celebrated Beauty, friend and compeer of Made. de Stael. She is represented in a white dress, with net ruff. The artist has happily caught the moment of one of her bewitching smiles.

Size 21½ in. by 17½ in.

LOT XV.

COURTOIS (JEAN)—NAMED IL BORGOGNONE.

A BATTLE PIECE.

In this picture two parties of horsemen are exchanging pistol shots, and sword cuts ; the whole action is extremely spirited.

Size 57 in. by 42½ in.

Lopin Viole

LOT XVI.

COURTOIS (JEAN)—NAMED IL BORGOGNONE.

A BATTLE PIECE.

A party of horsemen are charging up a hill, and meeting with a repulse; the foremost figure in the group is discharging a musket; men and horses are full of life and spirit, and admirably grouped.

Size 57 in. by 42½ in.

LOT XVII.

DUCQ (JEAN LE).

Interior of a Corps de Garde.

On the right four soldiers seated at table, are laughing at the entrance of a woman in a very low-necked dress, brought in by their chief; near this last, a group of armour, arms, and a red mantle are thrown upon a barrel.

In the distance are two soldiers lying down, looking on at the scene before them.

Signed below, at the left corner, "Le Ducq."

Size 22½ in. by 14½ in.

LOT XVIII.

VERNET (JOSEPH).

A Shipwreck.

On a rock, beaten by the waves, two naked men are hauling a woman from the sea by a rope, assisted by a man, placed on a rock below; higher up a sailor and a woman in red, point to a three-masted vessel, under the Dutch flag, which has just struck; the sculptured prow has the name of Wool on it.

To the right two sailors are hauling on a rope attached to the sinking vessel, by their side a crowd of figures engaged in gathering the salvage.

On the left a boat partly seen is full of rowers trying to pull out; the after part of the boat is hidden by the crest of a wave; a naked man on a cask with his back visible is close by.

In the background a cutter is firing cannon; and still further off are outlines of ships, and a fortress lighted by a sunbeam which darts through the tempestuous sky.

Signed, to the right hand, at bottom, "*J. Vernet,* 1761."

Size 52½ in. by 39 in.

LOT XIX.

BOL (J).

Head of an Old Man.

A cabinet picture, painted with much softness; the treatment of the hair and beard particularly excellent.

Size 8½ in. by 6½ in.

LOT XX.

DIETRICH (CHRISTIAN).

Preaching of John the Baptist.

On the right are the figures of two women, an old and a young one; the latter holds an infant in her arms, whilst a young child clings to her dress, and another, rather older, plays with a dog. To the left are two men on horseback, one wearing a turban; the centre of the picture is filled with the figures of a crowd seated on the ground; in the midst of the circle thus formed stands the Baptist, with his right hand raised and the left supporting his staff and banner. In the distance, a city on a hill, with mountains beyond. Trees in the foreground, the branches crossing each other above, and birds flying about in them.

Size 14 in. by 11 in.

10½ fm Capt. Wilkinson
7 Rutland Park.

LOT XXI.

DIETRICH (CHRISTIAN).

Christ Mocked.

Christ, crowned with thorns, is seated in the centre, his hands bound with cords; one soldier, in a pointed steel helmet, behind to the right, is covering his shoulders with the purple robe; another, also to the right, but in front, is offering the humiliating reed. This soldier is bare headed, and wears a haubert of scale armour.

The sublime resignation, mingled with great agony, in the countenance of Christ is powerfully rendered, as is also the insulting expression on the faces of the guards.

Size 38½ in. by 28½ in.

LOT XXII.

JARDIN (KAREL DU).

Passing the Ford.

In the midst of a river an old man is followed by a woman seated upon an ass; he drives two cows and a horse laden with baggage, &c., amongst which is a large gourd. Another ass accompanies the horse. A woman in a red dress carries upon her head a wooden dish, on which is a copper jar. Two dogs are running in the water. All these figures are crossing a ford with the water knee deep.

On the right are some feudal ruins, with a tower in the centre of them; its battlements are nearly all thrown down, and grass is seen growing on the platforms.

Behind a wall covered with climbing plants, some poplars are seen near an old vaulted gate; in the distance wooded mountains, and at a still greater distance high and barren crests rear their heads in the midst of clouds, lighted by a setting sun.

Signed at the bottom, left hand, "*K. du Jardin, fecit.* 1660."

Size 16½ in. by 12 in.

Pt. in at Paris sale (2)

240 gns. Wilson

LOT XXIII.

BERGHEM (NICHOLAS).

The Caravan.

This picture represents an immense tract of mountainous country. Three persons, one in Eastern costume, on horseback, and two women on asses, are crossing a country varied by lakes, valleys, and lofty mountains. Near this group a shepherd playing on his flute, is followed by sheep and cows; beneath, in the distance, is a road passing through the centre of the land; herds of oxen and camels slowly advancing.

Signed at the bottom, left hand corner, "N Berchem."

Size 38 in. by 29 in.

LOT XXIV.

VAN EYCK (NICHOLAS).

26 Gns Sunday

Battle Piece.

A vast array of combatants, giving the varied episodes of a general engagement.

Troops on the left are storming a hill defended by the enemy. In the foreground the close quarters shew the deadly effects of the melée; the flying colours and spirited action of the masses engaged are well rendered.

Size 67 in. by 47 in.

290 fm. Metcalf

LOT XXV.

HOBBEMA (MINDERHOUT).

Landscape, with River and Mill.

A rustic scene at eventide, the stillness and quiet broken by the water from the overshot wheel of an old mill, falling into the river bordered with trees. On the right is an old building—the miller's home, with dovecot in its gable. A female in front of the house is the only figure introduced in the picture.

Signed in right hand corner at bottom, and dated 1655.

Size 61 in. by 44 in.

LOT XXVI.

VAN DYCK (ANTHONY).

Time cutting the Wings of Love.

Beneath the broken columns and ruins of a temple, Time, holding a resisting Cupid across his knees, is cutting his wings with a pair of shears: at his feet lies his scythe, and Cupid's quiver, containing the last arrow; in the right hand corner a skull is lying on the ground.

Upright. Size 43½ in. by 68 in.

Blvd at Paris
sale (29)
510 fus.
Wallinson

LOT XXVII.

REMBRANDT (VAN RYN).

CHRIST WITH THE REED.

The naked Christ is seated, his head bent down and crowned with thorns. Blood runs down his breast, his left arm and on to the ground; in his right hand he holds a reed, which a soldier in a turban, dressed in a green vest slashed with white, places in his hand. On the left a soldier wearing a brown and red garment and a cuirass, and having on his head a red cowl, looks at Christ; he is on his knees and rests his right on a large copper vase. Behind him another soldier, in profile, wearing a pointed helmet and gorget, looks on laughing.

The figures are life size.

Upright. Size 46 in. by 75 in.

XXVIII.

POTTER (PAUL).

Cattle in a Landscape.

A View in Holland. On the ground, at the foot of a tree, are a group of oxen, the two in front butting each other.

In the distance a vast green meadow, with cows and sheep, and farm houses in the midst of woods.

The sky is covered with grey and threatening clouds, and in their midst appears a break of blue sky.

Signed to the right, "*Paulus Potter,* 1650."

Size 15⅜ in. by 12¼ in.

1,050 gm.
Lloyd

LOT XXIX.

THE KOUCHELEFF BESBORODKO SAPPHIRE.

THIS MAGNIFICENT JEWEL was given by Sultan Ahmet III. to Prince Alexander Besborodko, Chancellor of the Russian Empire (the ancestor of the present owner), on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty of Peace at Jassy, in 1725.

In shape and size THIS EXTRAORDINARY STONE resembles the egg of a pigeon, it weighs upwards of sixty-four carats, and is now mounted as a brooch, surrounded by SEVENTEEN IMPORTANT BRILLIANTS OF THE FINEST WATER.

THIS SAPPHIRE is believed to be unique, both on account of its depth and brilliancy of color and of its size and perfect form.

FINIS.

ILap97-D1250